

The Labour Organiser

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**Comrades
and
Friends,**

Our tip about Brecon and Radnor given last month came off. Congratulations to this Party and particularly to its live Secretary, Mr. Tudor Watkins, to whom so much of this success is due. Here is what a writer in the "Daily Express" says about the matter:—

"It would be a great convulsion if we woke after a General Election one day and found that we were governed for the first time in our history by a Labour majority — by a Labour Government not only in office, but in power. . . .

"My serious warning is that the Conservative Party are now no longer safe in the agricultural seats. Once their rural support goes, they go, too. This week has seen signs such as an observer like me never thought to see."

"Stick it" is an excellent motto as a line of personal conduct. But the phrase has a new application for Labour folk through the issue by Headquarters of a set of a dozen handsome poster stamps to members and supporters, to be sold locally at a good profit.

Primarily the posters are intended to be used on private correspondence, but there are a variety of other ways of using the stamps with good propaganda effects which will occur to the ingenious organiser.

The stamps are got up in sheets of assorted twelves and they are certainly

well designed and effective. It is pointed out by the Labour Party that here is a splendid opportunity to secure good propaganda and to make a handsome profit at the same time. Supplies of the stamps cannot only be distributed through the usual channels, but they can be on sale at Labour Bazaars, Sales of Work, Members' Rallies and other Party gatherings.

We are interested to note, in reference to the South Leeds Socialist Week mentioned in our June issue, that no less than 1,500 copies of "Pensions and You" were sold during the week. Despite difficult weather conditions, there was an average of 30 workers in the streets for five evenings, among them eight councillors and aldermen, four municipal candidates and the Parliamentary Candidate. Incidentally, we gather from the "Leeds Weekly Citizen" that the whole city was covered by a similar campaign. The thoroughness of this work sets a high example and we do hope that other towns will do similarly.

West Renfrew D.L.P. has just conducted a vigorous loudspeaker van campaign with film shows, literature selling and canvassing combined.

Has your Party got its quota of 100 new subscribers to the Labour Book Service? If so the £5 bonus allowed for this work will surely prove a welcome windfall and an encouragement to set about getting the second 100. Parties which are not taking up the Labour Book Service scheme are missing a fine opportunity of adding to the education of their supporters and of making money while the opportunity lasts.

The days draw in. We desire to draw our readers' special attention to the urgency of our autumn campaign.

To Affiliated Organisations

The Autumn may bring a General Election fraught with tremendous responsibility, but giving the people of Britain the fullest opportunity of choosing between the "National" Government and the Labour Party fighting as an independent force for electoral authority and Parliamentary power.

At this stage it behoves every member of the Party, whatever may have been their views or attachments prior to the Southport Conference, to drop controversy, to unite in action, and to work for a great common achievement. The Labour Party calls for the undivided allegiance of all its members in support of its programme and its policy.

J. S. MIDDLETON

ADDITIONAL CANDIDATES.

- DURHAM: Gateshead. — Mr. Konni Ziliacus, 39, Albany Street, N.W.1.
 NORFOLK: East.—Mr. N. R. Tillett, 25, Patricia Road, Norwich.
 SUSSEX: Hastings.—Mr. W. W. Wood, 12, Aldborough Road, St. Leonards-on-Sea.
 YORKS.: Hull N. West.—Mr. David Freeman, 96, Priory Road, West Hampstead, N.W.6. Cleveland.—Mr. O. G. Willey, 11, Weoley Hill, Selly Oak, Birmingham.
 CARDIGANSHIRE.—Mr. Iwan Morgan, M.A., Glanfredd, Llandre, Cardiganshire.
 GLAM.: Llandaff and Barry.—Mr. A. L. Ungood-Thomas, 8, Old Square, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C.

CANDIDATURES WITHDRAWN.

- GLOS.: Cirencester and Tewkesbury.—Mrs. Mary Gray.
 KENT: Canterbury. — Mr. G. D. Manners.
 LANCs.: Bury.—Mr. Harvey Moore. Stretford.—Mr. E. A. Gower.
 LONDON: Wandsworth, Putney.—Miss Helen Keynes.
 MIDDx.: Hornsey.—Mr. John T. Murphy.
 STAFFS.: Smethwick.—Mr. O. G. Willey.
 WILTS.: Swindon.—Mr. W. G. Hall.

Election Envelopes

Most writers tell you to get in one or two sets of envelopes. This is quite good advice, and a Labour Party may order its envelopes without "beginning the election" in a legal sense. It must, however, be charged in the expenses in the election account later on. But whoever orders envelopes must know the size needed. But both the size and the quantity depend on what will go *in* the envelopes. Naturally a size that will take a quarto-fly election address will not be needed if the address is to be delivered door-to-door—a plan I don't like—or if same is to be embodied in the election newspaper—a plan I do approve. Further, the envelope must not be too tight a fit nor too large for the contents to flap about or get lost. If the funds will allow a double set of envelopes, one for the free postage and one for paid postage, or distribution—of course an unlikely event in most Labour fights—the envelopes will not necessarily be of the same size for each purpose. And finally it must be decided whether an envelope is to be addressed "Mr. and Mrs. —" thus saving nearly half the total, or whether each letter is to have an envelope. I never like treating the woman voter as other than a "free and independent elector," and so I much prefer an envelope each for man and wife. But the immense electorate under the new Franchise Bill will make matters more expensive and our hard-up Parties may boggle at this item. All the same, I feel it is necessary, and I would hesitate long before consenting to include man and wife in one envelope.

However, settle these items, and the envelopes may be ordered.

—From the *Labour Organiser* for March, 1928.

¶ FOLLOWING OUR USUAL PRACTICE OUR AUGUST ISSUE IS GIVEN OVER MAINLY TO REPRINTS OF USEFUL ARTICLES WHICH APPEARED IN EARLIER ISSUES. OUR READERS HAVE ALWAYS APPROVED OF THIS COURSE AND WE TRUST THAT OUR PRESENT SELECTION MEETS WITH EQUAL SATISFACTION.

Loud-Speaker HINTS and TIPS

Now that portable loud-speakers have become a necessity in political work, some hints on their use will be helpful to their users.

In the first place it should be remembered that the various units comprising the loud-speaker set require to be taken care of, and intelligently used. Immediately a purchase is decided upon it becomes necessary to provide a place where the set is to be permanently kept. We dislike seeing loud-speaker units lying about in the corners of clubrooms where unauthorised persons may interfere with what, after all, is a delicate electrical instrument.

Take care of the instrument

If the person in whose charge the loud-speaker is to be placed has a car and is able to utilise the same at outdoor meetings, so much the better, for though these sets are portable and may be placed in almost any suitable position, the ideal place for the trumpet is undoubtedly on top of a car.

We recently saw the roof of a car rather badly damaged owing to inexperienced hands having so fixed the instrument as to permit the heavy diaphragm to rest on an unsupported part on the roof, which soon caved in. The instrument should be so fixed as to rest at both ends on a cross support, or at any rate on such solid support as the structure of the roof permits. In emergency, cushions can be utilised to prevent any possible damage to the roof, but we ourselves prefer to use pieces of spongy rubber, such as are now used in the construction of car seats.

The trumpet should be securely tied down, and it is then only a matter of moments to make the necessary connections to the amplifier and microphone or gramophone as desired.

When a car is fitted in the way described, any kind of outdoor work may be engaged in. When touring, the speaker holds the microphone in his hand seated, in the car, and if a gramophone is used, the operator sits on the rear seat from whence manipu-

lation is quite easy. All the equipment, of course, is carried in the car, and very effective work can be done by alternatively playing the gramophone and speaking over the "mike."

Touring in the rain with the equipment in use is not to be recommended; rain may be blown up the trumpet and damage the diaphragm. No harm is, of course, done if the car is stationary and not facing drifting rain.

Wet weather work

When travelling in wet weather in a car so equipped it is our custom to block the trumpet with a duster, though the ideal arrangement is a mackintosh arrangement fitting over the mouth of the trumpet.

For fixed outdoor meetings the top of the car is again the ideal place for the loud-speaker. At a demonstration where the platform and table is available, the "mike" can be carried right to the table. More commonly, of course, the speaker just gets up on his "soap box" and holds the "mike" in his hand. Care should always be taken that the mouth of the trumpet faces away from the "mike," otherwise some weird effects are obtainable. If the gramophone is to be played at the outdoor meeting the operator, of course, retains his seat in the car and operates from there.

All the above applies of course only where a car is available. Portable loud-speaker equipment can, however, be conveyed by hand or otherwise to any suitable spot, and the trumpet suspended or rested in any convenient place.

At all outdoor meetings a little manipulation and intelligence is required in manoeuvring either the car or placing the loud-speaker in position as to have the greatest effect.

A strong wind blowing into the horn or on to the "mike" is apt to be disturbing, and just as the photographer chooses his position for a photograph, so must the loud-speaker operator sometimes exercise a little ingenuity to get the best effect.

In confined places care must be

taken to avoid the volume striking a wall and creating an echo. Toning-down will sometimes provide the cure if no readjustment of direction is possible.

The portable loud-speaker equipment may, of course, be used indoors as well as outdoors, toning down to suit the size of the hall. Combined indoor and outdoor use is not unknown, the speaker using the "mike" indoors, the lead being carried to the trumpet placed outside the hall. An indoor and an outdoor, or overflow, meeting, are thus possible.

As to care of the equipment, fortunately just as with modern wireless equipment any intelligent person is able to master the manipulation of the switches in two or three minutes. Care must always be taken to switch off after use, for neglect in this direction will mean a run-down battery, and disappointment when the instrument is next required. A spare battery is strongly recommended. Fortunately, the loud-speaker equipment is extraordinarily economical in use, and, beyond the expenditure of a few coppers for re-charging the low-tension battery, no expenditure of any kind will be necessary for many months, when possibly the high-tension battery will need renewing.

Hints on using the "mike"

And now a few hints regarding the use of the "mike." Bellowing into the "mike" is unnecessary and productive of distressing effects. The majority of speakers would do well to hold the "mike" some six inches from the mouth, though indoors the distance may be greater. Sound falls, and the "mike" should be held or placed on a level with the chin or rather below. Where the "mike" is placed on the table the necessary adjustment should be made for each speaker.

By no means all speakers perform well before the "mike," and a speaker whose habit is to gesticulate, bob about and shout, should on no account use the instrument. Some speakers, too, are nervous before the "mike" and unable to express themselves so effectively as without it. But in most cases if a speaker has a suitable "mike" voice this nervousness will wear away.

Finally, perhaps we may be forgiven for printing below the unfinished effusion of a lady friend who, we are sure,

will, after this, desire to remain anonymous. We take exception to the description of a loud-speaker as an "instrument of woe," for it is an instrument of extraordinary effectiveness in election campaigns and for ordinary propaganda use. And sometimes we think the public is very grateful for our entertainment and always of course infinitely better off if they would listen to our arguments and take our advice.

Labour ideas we hope to sow,
To counteract the Tory show,
So take an instrument of woe,
Loud-speaker playing as we go.
It makes a row, it makes a din
It brings to doors all who were in,
And having got the blighters out
We start our politics to shout.

* * *

And now the Editor will have a try:—

Good friends who stick to Gladstone's way,
What hope is there in yesterday?
Be in the van—be up-to-date!
Rouse all to hear your candidate.
The music, too, just let her go;
Music hath charms — on with the show!

Your speakers next, candidate too,
The mike for them, it's something new

Like Labour's programme to attract
And bring the votes your last man lacked.

So onward, friends, to victory go,
Loud-speaker leads; Let's let them know.



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That Marked Register

In reply to my enquiry as to the Register, I am often told, "Yes, we've got it," or "Yes, the wards have got it," and there the matter often seems to have ended. What on earth is the Register for but to be used? How many use it to get the really essential facts about their own Party?

First of all we want an analysis of the register, and a tabular statement of it. This statement should show the number of voters in each area, male and female separately. The statement should give the number of Parliamentary and the number of Local Government voters separately. Some starred voters require special enumeration.

The full-time agent will, of course, probably have all this and be able to supplement it with information as to the number of new voters in each district—sometimes information worth making special use of. Records carefully kept will disclose more useful information about the Register—such as the districts where removals are most frequent, etc., but this needn't trouble us now. Suffice it that we must know who the voters are and how they are distributed.

Now as to the use of the Register in preparation for the General Election. Many Parties (and even agents) fail somehow to keep a marked register. Yet the marked register is the absolute basis of scientific and consistent organisation. It tells you infallibly where your strength lies, where the weakness lies, it shows up mercilessly your lack of impression on the constituency and it warms you and encourages you as you see the signs of expansion reflected in its markings as the months go by.

The marked Register is, as the term implies, a register utilised for the purpose of containing markings against the names of electors recording some important fact concerning them. Thus we may mark all known supporters with an "X," an individual member with an additional "T" or a known opponent with an "O." Additional information may be recorded such as "Co." for Co-operative member, "N.U.R." for a member of that Union, and so on.

—From the *Labour Organiser* for February, 1928.

The Smallest Labour Office ?

Mr. R. Montford, J.P., who has recently taken over the part-time agency of the Evesham Division, has, we believe, the distinction of occupying the smallest Labour office in the kingdom.

The "house" in which the office is situate is a two-storey brick building apparently at one time an adjunct to the King Edward VI School, which has been converted into a Labour Club. It is, however, an entirely separate building, of one room only up and down, and was without either water, fireplace or sanitary conveniences. The ground floor is now utilised as the office of the Labour Club, and the Labour Party Office is the ancient bedroom ten feet long by seven feet six inches wide. The good sound oak floors whose age is uncertain to a hundred years or so add a distinction to the little office now completely furnished by local voluntary labour.

—From the *Labour Organiser* for May, 1928.

To all Secretaries and Organisers

**Why not a
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your Division?**

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THE

POSTERS

PROPAGANDA ART COURSE

Article 2.

This is the second of a series of three articles on the main subjects taught in the Propaganda Art Course. The first article dealt with Banner-Production, and the third will deal with Window Display and Wall-Newspapers at length, and briefly with the rest of the subjects taught in the Course. This article deals with the various types of poster taught in the Course, and the construction of the Silk-Screen Press.

The propaganda value of the poster cannot be overestimated, but this value can be, and often is, completely thrown away, purely because insufficient attention has been paid to a few simple, basic principles of poster design. The first of these is that a poster must be easily read and understood. So, when working out a poster, it is advisable to keep the design as simple as possible, and to avoid strenuously any suspicion of overcrowding.

A wide border of clean paper round the edges, and plenty of space between the lines of lettering help to make a poster legible. Clashing colours, unless very carefully handled, can render a poster ineffective by making it illegible. On a pictorial poster, the pictorial part should be kept simple, so that it does not detract from the lettering, and should be incorporated in the design with the lettering, not worked out as a separate thing altogether (see Fig. 4).

These points apply equally well to every type of poster taught in the Course, the main types being Script, Aerographed, and Silk-Screen. The first type, Script, is a very useful type of poster to use when the number required does not justify the use of the Silk-Screen (e.g., 2 or 3 posters to advertise a meeting or to carry on sandwich boards in a demonstration).

This type of poster (Fig. 1) is executed with broad pens. These pens can be obtained in a variety of types, a very satisfactory sort being the "Boxall" pen, manufactured by Mitchell's and retailed by Winsor & Newton's ranging in price from 1s. to 1s. 6d. each. These pens are one of

the easiest types to handle, and are almost impossible to wear out.

Waterproof ink must be used if the posters are to be exposed to the weather. "Aerograph" ink, which can be obtained quite cheaply in $\frac{1}{2}$ -pint or 1-pint bottles (e.g., Palmer's, 82-84, Old Street, London, E.C.1, 2s. per pint black, 3s. per pint colours), is quite good, and much more economical than ordinary Indian ink, which is denser, but very much more expensive.

Most papers which are not "hard-glazed" (shiny), or very thin are suitable, but the smaller the pen, the smoother the paper must be, in order that the ink may run freely from the pen. The paper should be pinned on to a very flat board, which should be sloped at an angle of between 30 and 40 degrees. The pen, which should be cleaned frequently, can be filled either with a brush, or by dipping into a shallow receptacle of ink.

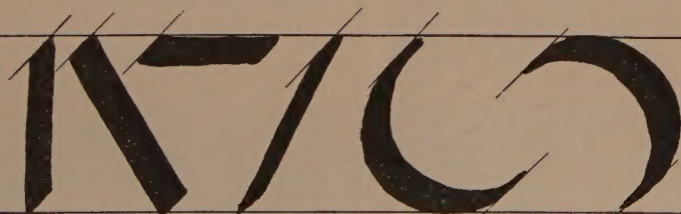
The most important thing to remember when using the pen is that the strokes must be made by moving the whole arm from the shoulder, not by moving the fingers or wrist. The angle of the pen on the paper should always be the same (see Fig. 2). There are, as shown in Fig. 2, only a limited number of strokes, the letters being formed by a combination of these strokes. For a good script style, Dryad lettering cards (1 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. each, from Dryad Handicrafts, 42, St. Nicholas Street, Leicester, and 22, Bloomsbury Street, London, W.C.1), can be recommended. Serifs (the small horizontal strokes at the top and bottom of vertical and oblique strokes), should be simple straight strokes. It is a mistake to base them on a curve, as this tends to weaken the lettering.

The relative heights of capital and small letters are determined as follow: Build up six horizontal strokes, one above the other (Fig. 2b). This gives the height of the capitals, the small letters being only $\frac{4}{5}$ strokes in height.

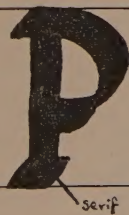
To ensure legibility, plenty of space must be left around and between the lines of lettering on a script poster.

Fig. 1

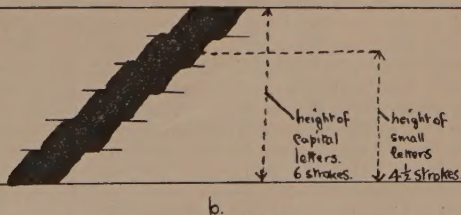
LABOUR
GIVES THE
CHILDREN
A CHANCE



These are all the strokes possible with a script pen. — note:—The pen always meets the paper at the same angle.
All letters are made up by combining these strokes.



serif



b.

Fig. 2.

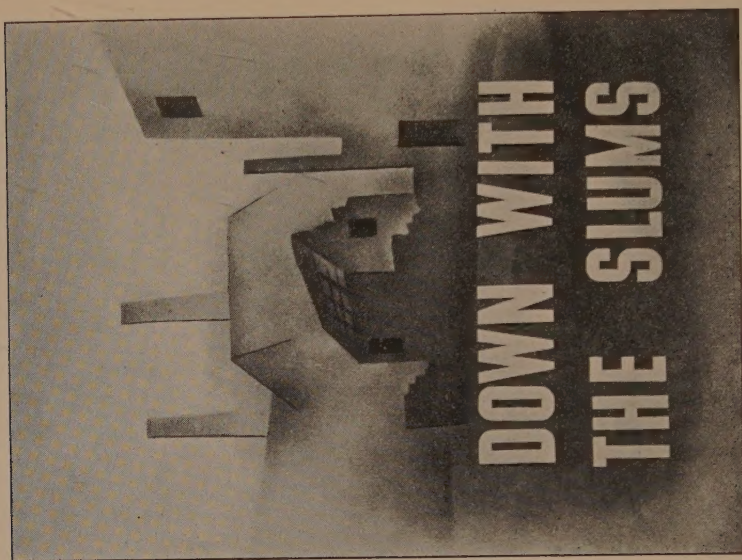


Fig. 3

Whereas the script poster is, generally speaking, a plain, lettered poster, the aerographed (sprayed) poster is best suited to pictorial work. This type of poster is made by cutting a stencil in stiff paper which will not cockle when wet, the ink being sprayed through the stencil on to cartridge or other suitable (slightly absorbent) paper. The fact that the design has to be cut on a stencil, tends to make this type of poster simple and direct. An aerographed design can be effectively combined with script lettering to make a very satisfactory poster.

The best method of spraying is with the "Aerograph," but this is a very expensive machine which requires a considerable amount of skill to use, and which can be very easily ruined. There are, however, two very good substitutes, although, of course, the results obtained are cruder than those obtained with the correct machine. The first of these involves using a spray attachment which can be obtained to fit on to vacuum cleaners. Several different degrees of fineness can be obtained by the use of different nozzles. The other method, however, is the simplest of the lot, involving an ordinary mouth-spray, costing about 6d. This, however, gives cruder results than the others.

Several posters can be made from the same stencil by the spray method. An example of an aerographed poster is shown in Fig. 3.

The third type of poster taught in the Propaganda Art Course, Silk Screen, is really a development on the previous type. Once again, a stencil is used, but, instead of spraying ink through it, paint is squeezed through it on to the paper underneath. This method is very cheap, and, with a little practice, posters can be produced at the rate of 300 in an hour. This type of poster can either be plain lettered or pictorial. Once again, as the design has to be cut on a stencil (in this case, made of ordinary silk screen paper), it has to be simple and direct.

When the stencil has been cut, it is placed, with some clean paper underneath, on the baseboard of the press, directly beneath the screen itself. This is then lowered on to the paper, and some paint is poured in along the back of the screen. This paint is then pulled across the screen to the front with the "squeegee." It sticks the stencil on to the screen, and at the same time it makes the first print. By "squeegeeing" the paint back again, another print is made.

Two people are required to work the press effectively, one to do the actual

printing, and one to take out the prints as they are done. These should be hung on a drying rack, which can be made by fixing 6 or 7 lathes about 2ft. long on to a batten (2in. x 1in.), this then being fixed on to the wall so that the lathes stick out. The prints are hung on to these. As many as 50 sheets of paper can be placed under the screen at the same time, and printed one after the other at considerable speed. The screen should never be left down on a poster, as the holes in the silk will tend to stop up with paint. It should always be cleaned with paraffin immediately after use, and dried carefully with clean rag. The screen is ruined if left overnight.

The following is the method for constructing a screen for printing posters 30in. x 20in. (double-crown). This screen costs from 7s. to 10s. to construct, including the material for the screen itself. The screen consists of a frame of 2in. x 1in. wood, with a raised beading of 1in. quarter-round wood fixed on the inside edge (Fig. 5a). The inside measurements are 26in. x 32in. Over the side of this frame on which the beading has been fixed, a piece of cotton organdie (about 1s. 3d. a yard, 45in. wide) is stretched as tightly as possible without splitting, and pinned down with drawing pins 2in. apart. Extra tension can then be obtained by screwing four lengths of 1in. x 1in.

wood close to the beading round the edge of the frame (Fig. 5b). Two lengths of 2in. x 1in. are then screwed on to the short sides of the screen, so that they project by 12in. at one end. These arms are hinged to a baseboard of 3/8in. plywood (Fig. 5c). A surround of paper (dampened to make it pliable) is fixed with cellulose paint around the screen itself. This surround, which prevents the paint leaking out round the edges, should be stuck on to the organdie, and should be 4in. wide at the back, 2 1/2in. wide at the front, and 1 1/2in. wide on each side. Directly under the opening in the screen, a baseboard of 1/4in. plywood (absolutely flat) is fixed permanently into position. A rope fixed to the front corners of the frame, and run through a pulley in the ceiling, with a weight at the other end to counter-balance the screen, speeds up printing, and saves a lot of hard work.

The squeegee is made of two pieces of plywood, 30 1/2in. x 4in., and two battens, one 1in. x 1 1/2in., and the other 1in. x 1/4in. The rubber is 30 1/2in. x 2in. x 1/4in. (costing 1s. 3d.). This is constructed as shown in Fig. 5d. The edge of the rubber is the part which does the work, by scraping the paint across the screen.

Silk screen paint (called Poster Screen Paint and costing 1s. per lb., all colours, from Blackwell's, 7, Dyer's

Fig. 4



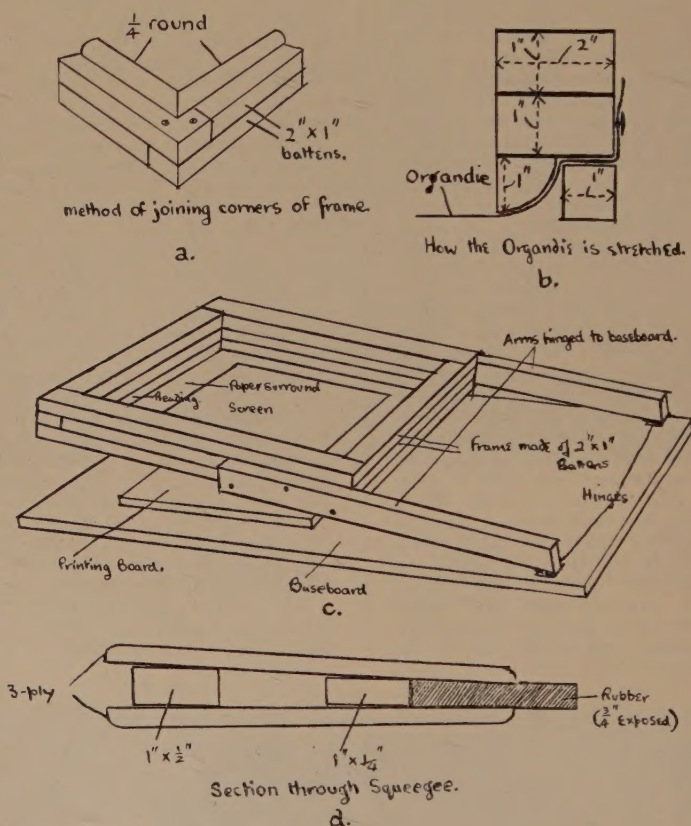


Fig. 5.

Buildings, Holborn, London) is obtained ready mixed, and only requires thinning (to a creamy consistency) with petrol or turpentine (petrol dries more quickly). It is advisable to emulsify the paint, however, by the addition of cold soap solution (a jelly, which should be whipped briskly before mixing). The bulk of the paint can be more than doubled by adding this solution, and then thinning with petrol, thus making the process more economical.

White silk screen paper can be

obtained from P. J. Poole, 4a, Parton Street, London, W.C.1, at 10s. per ream (M.G. Poster Paper, 30lbs., double-crown). Coloured papers can also be obtained, some of these being cheaper than white.

An example of a silk screen poster is given in Fig. 4.

For any further information on this or any other propaganda subject, write to Hon. Sec., Propaganda Art Course, Christchurch Halls, 5, Watney Street, London, E.1.

The House-Owner Problem

Question.—With a view to creating greater interest in the work of the Labour Party in our district, we are endeavouring to draft a programme of what we stand for, and what we consider should be undertaken by the U.D.C.

This programme would primarily be for the local U.D.C. elections next April, but also might be used as propaganda from time to time, as showing what the local Party stands for as against the present U.D.C.

The great difficulty we are up against in trying to frame this programme is the rates.

In case you don't know, ——— is a district comprising, largely, people who go up to London to work, being mostly clerks or the professional classes. Most of them have already done so, or are purchasing their own houses, consequently the type of councillor who is prepared to do nothing in order that the rates shall not be increased, gets the biggest support.

We thought that you, in your wide experience, might be able to assist, and I was instructed to write you to see if you could give us any helpful suggestions.

There must be lots of districts in the country similar to ours, eaten up with this kind of suburban snobbery, so if you can help in any way we shall be very grateful.

I might add, our local council has been fairly broad-minded. Land has been acquired for playing fields, roads made up and houses built by direct labour, but the Tradesmen's Association is getting busy and using its influence with local councillors to keep down the rates.

We have only one representative on the Council, which makes it very difficult, but we feel that if we could get out something which would appeal even though it might slightly increase the rates we might make headway.

Answer.—The question here raised is not strictly within the province of the *Labour Organiser*, but as it is not entirely within the province, either, of any other Labour journal, we will attempt an answer.

The problem our friend raises is not

entirely new. We know of one case where members of our own Party and active workers at Parliamentary elections threw in their lot at local elections with the Ratepayers' Association from much the same sentiments as our friend finds prevalent in his district. We think Socialists have realised that the keenest resistance to either nationalisation or expropriation would come from the smallest holders. This anticipation is finding proof in many places where the new householder is found to have tendencies which would out-landlord even the old régime.

We predict that the new class of house-owner is going to become an important economic and political factor in the near future. At the moment most of these people are assertive and house-proud, but we would not be surprised if in a few years' time the same class is found crying to the country for some relief from the burdens it has undertaken. House property has been going down in value; if salaries and wages continue to fall while mortgage interest remains stationary and cost of repairs begins to be felt, a crisis in many homes will not be far distant.

[This prophecy made in 1931 has come true.—*Ed.*, "L.O."]

Notwithstanding the latter frank statement, we are of the opinion that converts to Socialism will be found in increasing numbers in the class referred to. The history of our Party has not shown us that the attainment to a freer and fuller life by one section of the workers has made them less receptive to our teaching and less eager to work on our behalf, and who will this class look to, but to Labour, when the present ramp is over, and the Shylocks who have them in their power begin to squeeze?

Our friend's immediate difficulties centre round the question of rates and the possibility of stunt economy candidates running away with the votes.

The answer to that is that Labour Government does not necessarily mean increased rates. Our friends may obtain ample proof of this by obtain-

ing tables showing the rates, and reductions in them, obtaining in centres where Labour has a majority. Labour stands for the *wise spending* of the ratepayers' money and that it can be trusted to administer wisely can be proved by fact and figure.

The house-owner might also be appealed to by pointing out to him that the success of the stunt economy candidate might actually mean a depreciation of his property. What keeps up the value of his property more than the amenities of the neighbourhood, clean streets, proper sanitary and public facilities, in short, all the things which Labour says are proper and desirable, and should be secured for every community? We suggest that one or two special speakers applying themselves particularly to the owner-occupier would soon be able to convince a considerable section of this class that their interest lies with Labour.

—From the *Labour Organiser* for September, 1931.

Electing the E.C.

A correspondent writes us with reference to a point which has arisen in his Party which raises a difficulty which we are surprised has not been experienced before. In the Party indicated it has been the practice each year to send out to the affiliated and component organisations inviting them to send in nominations for the elective offices and the Executive. It has apparently not been the practice to send out at any stated time during the year inviting organisations to appoint their delegates for the ensuing year. Now that the latter procedure is compulsory under rule the question raised is how affiliated organisations are to send in nominations when they will only know for certain the names of the delegates of their own organisation.

Our correspondent asks whether after the delegates to the General Management Committee have been all appointed it would be the right thing to send their names round to the organisations so that everyone should have a full opportunity for nominating for all the offices from a list of persons entitled to be elected.

We are of the opinion that the course suggested is undesirable from several points of view, and also that it is cumbersome and would involve a good deal of delay. The real point is whether or not the method of inviting nominations is a wise or necessary one. We do not think this procedure has been contemplated by the rules for Local Labour Parties, and indeed local organisations can go too far in seeking to imitate the procedure of national organisations. The persons who by rule are entitled to elect the Executive and officers are the delegates to the Management Committee, and by implication these are the only persons too who are entitled to nominate.

It is certainly to be said that by inviting the organisations to send in nominations an opportunity is given them of taking a greater interest in the Party's business. But the knowledge of the members of many of these bodies as to suitable persons will necessarily be very limited. The meetings at which such nominations will be made may be composed of people who do not pay the political levy, and there will certainly be some heart-burnings and dissatisfaction in some quarters when a branch's nominee gets defeated. In short, we do not see how a satisfactory election of officers and Executive could be carried out on nominations secured in this way, and we should be surprised to learn that any Local Party had secured the endorsement of a rule permitting this procedure, which of course shuts out the rights of properly elected delegates.

There is something to be said for circularising the delegates after their names have been secured and inviting nominations from them. Even so we are not enamoured with this procedure because the re-election of delegates now compulsory by rules will result in an annual influx of new blood in most cases, and it seems best to wait till the annual meeting is actually convened before taking the election.

It should be noted that the model rules are uniform for every kind of Party on this point, and it is therein laid down that the officers, the Executive Committee and two auditors *shall be elected at the annual meeting of the General Committee.*

—From the *Labour Organiser* for January, 1931.

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Election Stories

Beware of the heckler is advice to which all speakers will do well to give heed.

A well-known Socialist was addressing a street-corner meeting held to celebrate his adoption as a Labour candidate in a by-election.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he began, "I am glad to be Labour's standard-bearer at this election. I say that with a knowledge of all classes and all parties. I have been a rich man and I have been a poor man. Yes! my friends, there was an occasion in my life when I was worth nearly one hundred thousand pounds on one day, while on the day following I was as poor as any of you."

"Lord, guv'nor," cried a man in the crowd. "If you did that with your own money, what the hell are you going to do with ours?"

Here is a story of an amusing blunder made by a speaker at a Tory meeting in Yorkshire which was held about the time of the Grand National race meeting.

In opening the meeting, the Chairman said, "Before we listen to our candidate this evening, I feel sure that you, ladies and gentlemen, will wish to pass a resolution of congratulation to our beloved Sovereign on his recovery from a very severe illness. This resolution is one which needs no seconder. I ask you to stand and sing together the first and last verses of The Grand National."

* * *

Another amusing incident was told to me by a friend who was canvassing in a working-class constituency in Belfast. At one house at which he called he was asked to step inside. In the passage he noticed a picture of King William of Orange on the wall faced by a picture of the Pope on the other. This struck him as rather comical and he ventured to remark to the housewife that it was rather unusual to see these two pictures hanging together.

"Well, ye see, it's like this," said the woman. "Me man's an Orange-man and sure I'm a good Catholic."

"And how do you get along together?" enquired the canvasser.

"Shure," was the reply, "we get along all right all the year round till it comes to the 12th July. He gets drunk then and comes home and smashes the Pope to bits."

"And what do you do?"

"Shure, I don't do anything at all till the fit's over. Then I go and pawn King Billy and buy a new Pope."

—W. Arthur Peacock, in the *Labour Organiser* for June, 1931.

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EASY TERMS

THE LABOUR PARTY DIRECTORY

The alterations listed below, together with those published in previous issues, are to be taken as amendments to the Annual Report published in June, 1939.

Index Descrip-

No.	tion	Name of Organisation	Present Secretary and Address
D5	CD	Abingdon D.L.P.	Mr. A. LEDGER, 27, High Street, Abingdon, Berks.
F26	CD	Bodmin D.L.P.	Mr. T. A. NASH, West Lodge, St. Germans, Saltash, Cornwall.
F45	SB	Exeter D.L.P.	Mr. T. C. HENDY, 31, Catherine Street, Exeter, Devon.
G88	BD	Upton D.L.P.	Mr. J. LAYZELL, 11, Whyteville Road, Forest Gate, London, E.7.
D113	CD	Aldershot D.L.P.	Mr. C. E. MASON, 82, Victoria Road, Farnborough, Hants.
D116	CD	New Forest & Christchurch D.L.P.	Miss F. M. FOOTE, 69, Parsonage Barn Road, Ringwood, Hants.
B159	BD	Fairfield D.L.P.	Mr. P. T. LONGRIDGE, 5, Dial Street, Kensington, Liverpool, 7.
B184	BD	Salford West D.L.P.	Mr. A. HARVEY, 1, Nansen Street, Salford, 6.
B188	CD	Chorley D.L.P.	Coun. W. D. STANSFIELD, Overlookers' Rooms, 26, Cunliffe Street, Chorley, Lancs.
E251	BD	Kensington South D.L.P.	Mr. S. J. GEE, 99, Lexham Gardens, London, W.8.
E267/9		Southwark B.L.P. & T.C.	Mr. A. C. CLARK, 28, Oakhurst Grove, London, S.E.2.
E277	BD	Putney D.L.P.	Mr. E. G. COLLIS, 24, Lower Common South, London, S.W.15.
D284	SB	Edmonton B.L.P.	Mr. F. LONG, 372, Fore Street, Edmonton, London, N.9. Tel.: Tottenham 1627.
D294	CD	Harrow D.L.P.	Mr. J. BARROW, 36, Crofts Road, Kenton, Harrow, Middx.
A316	BD	Newcastle West D.L.P.	Mr. R. KELLY, 49, Ovington Grove, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 5.
D331	SB	Oxford City L.P.	Mrs. FASNACHT, Central Labour Party Offices, 46, Cowley Road, Oxford. Tel.: Oxford 3682.
C350	BD	Stoke, Fenton & Longton, D.L.P.	Mr. R. MARROW, 28, Warrington Street, Fenton, Stoke-on-Trent.
G369	CD	Sudbury D.L.P.	Mr. E. A. LEE, Linden Lea, Station Hill, Hadleigh, Suffolk.
D385	CD	East Grinstead D.L.P.	Miss J. SHARPE, 24, Queen's Road, East Grinstead, Sussex.
H483	CD	Wrexham T.C. & L.P.	Mr. E. J. WILLIAMS, Trade Council Rooms, 4A, Grosvenor Road, Wrexham, Denbighs.
J516	SB	Ayr Burghs T.C. & L.P.	Mr. P. MCCARTNEY, 67, Wallace Street, Ayr.
J518	CD	Kilmarnock Div. T. & L.C.	Mr. T. HANNAN, Labour Hall, David's Lane, Duke Street, Kilmarnock.
J566	CD	North Midlothian D.L.P.	Mr. J. KANE, Dott Memorial Library, 9, George IV Bridge, Edinburgh.



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Questions Re-answered

A BATCH OF RE-PRINTED QUERIES

Lead Pencils as Marks of Distinction

Question. We have bought a large number of lead pencils and printed on them "Vote for——." We are selling the pencils at twopence each so as to raise money for the election. Are these pencils an election expense, and have we done anything illegal by printing on them the words mentioned? I have tried to look up this matter myself, but gave it up. Perhaps the editor of the *Labour Organiser* will spare a moment in these busy times to solve this problem.

Answer. In normal circumstances there is nothing at all illegal in any person engaging in the sort of expense mentioned for the purpose of raising money. The expenses connected with raising money are to be distinguished from expenses in connection with the conduct and management of the election, or perhaps it would be better to say such expenses *ought* to be clearly distinguishable. By this we mean that the expense of printing or sending out a circular appealing for funds should not necessarily be returned as an election expense. A whist drive or a dance to raise money is not an election expense, but there are borderline cases where the view we have expressed does not hold good.

The selling of pencils is an innocent thing, but the slogan impressed on the pencils raises another problem. We suppose it would be difficult to argue that the words "Vote for——" constitute the pencils an address, bill, notice, placard or poster, within the meaning of the Acts. But are these pencil marks of distinction?

On the latter question we should not like to express an opinion. The intention of the sellers is obviously not merely to raise money for the election, but also to advertise the candidate and also, it might be argued, to stamp the user of the pencil as a supporter of the candidate. In other words to supply him with a mark of distinction.

With this reservation regarding a matter not mentioned in our correspondent's question, we should advise that the cost of the pencils be not entered in the election return. Those handling the pencils had much better now stand by their protestation that the pencils are purely money-getters. It is safer in future to leave out the name of the candidate and to purchase pencils imprinted only with the name of the Party.

Mixing Municipal and Parliamentary Campaigns

Question. In this borough we have got our Municipal Elections on at the same time as the Parliamentary Elections, and I suppose this is happening in other places. It is almost certain that some of our leaflets will have reference to both elections. It has been suggested that we take a photograph of our Municipal candidates and our Parliamentary candidate, and it has further been suggested that we should print the lot together on one of our leaflets. I should like your advice as to whether there is anything illegal about this. Further, what is the position when it comes to returning the cost of any printing which refers to both elections.

Answer. Though no doubt it is extraordinarily difficult in some cases to entirely disassociate the Municipal Elections from the Parliamentary Election, every effort should be made to do so, at any rate, so far as expenses are concerned. It is, of course, impossible, and we are not sure that it is desirable, to stop speakers from making an appeal to support Labour all along the line, but it is going too far when a meeting is virtually a joint meeting for the Parliamentary candidate and the Municipal candidates. The same thing applies to the issue of literature. We do not like the idea of a joint publication. A casual reference either in Parliamentary literature or in Municipal

literature to the other election is of no importance, but special literature expressly intended to cover both elections does raise complications.

If anything of the sort has already been done it seems safest to charge the whole cost to the Parliamentary election account rather than to attempt any allocation, but it will still be advisable to debit the amount over again to the Municipal accounts. And here is a further problem. The amount so debited requires to be split up among the candidates to whom the literature applies. If the amount per head is under one pound the thing is simplified, but the receipts for sums for one pound and over are required with a Municipal return of expenses. Please do not attempt to enter into arrangements with the printer to get a series of receipts to apply to each person. It is better to file a memorandum describing the transaction, and this course at any rate would impress an election judge with the pure intentions of the persons concerned. Better still keep your elections separate.

Is the Caretaker's Fee Illegal Employment ?

Question. At nearly all our schools in this division we have to pay the caretaker although a lot of schools are lent to us free for the election. I should like your opinion as to whether paying the caretaker is really an illegal employment. He is employed, is he not, by us when we pay him, and I am wondering how to get over the difficulty in the election returns.

Answer. There is nothing to worry about. The Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act does, it is true, prohibit employment other than that specifically mentioned and permitted by the Acts. But at the same time it permits "expenses of holding public meetings" (see C.I.P.P.A., 1883, first schedule, part II.).

We have heard it argued that the phraseology of the Act actually permits the payment of speakers' expenses, the speakers being necessary to the meeting. This is doubtful (see next question). It is, however, clear by later legislation that payments may be made to cover any actual and necessary expenses in respect of the preparation of the room before the meeting and after the meeting and for cleaning the room.

The fact that this charge is paid direct to the caretaker and not to the managers of the school, does not, in our opinion, constitute an illegal employment within the terms of the C.I.P.P.A.

Our own practice is to return caretakers' fees under the heading "meetings." The prescribed form has it

"Paid for the hire of rooms
for holding public meetings £ s. d.

We think the charge should go there.

Never, however, pay any caretaker's fee which appears to be excessive in relation to the services rendered. A tip to a caretaker such as one would ordinarily give, or has given previously, is not illegal, but it is open to serious misconstruction.

How to Deal with Speakers' Expenses

Question. What shall we do about speakers' expenses this time? I understand that payment of speakers' expenses is not proper. This may put us in the cart, and if we pay how are we going to make up the return?

Answer. As indicated in an answer given above there is some ground for suggesting that the payment of speakers' expenses is justified by the terms of the C.I.P.P.A. which permit the payment of expenses of holding public meetings. The balance of opinion is altogether against this view, though there is a widely-held opinion that speakers' expenses are chargeable as "miscellaneous" expenses. We subscribe to this view, though unfortunately there is no clear decision which makes the course unchallengeable. On no account, however, must speakers be paid any fee. A fee would amount to illegal employment; nor must the expenses be allowed to be on such a lavish scale as virtually to amount to a fee.

There is another course open in this matter. A candidate may extend hospitality to his friends and to such as may come to help him. There is nothing at all improper in the candidate discharging the hotel bills of friends who speak for him, provided the practice is not abused. Where the course indicated is taken, speakers' expenses become a part of the candidate's personal expenses.

Is a Party Meeting an Election Expense?

Question. We are holding a private aggregate meeting of our members during the election, admission to which will be by production of membership cards. I dare say several hundred will be present, and the candidate and his wife are both to speak. The meeting will, of course, talk about the election, but ought the hire of the hall to be included in the election expenses?

Answer. If every meeting at which the business of the Election was discussed were charged to the Election Accounts we are sure some difficulties would arise. There may be Party meetings which will remain purely Party meetings and have no relation to the conduct and management of the election, and the expenses of such need not be returned. But the meeting referred to is clearly connected with the conduct and management of the election, and notwithstanding that the proceedings are private and confined to certain persons, the expenses are returnable.

Is This a Placard?

Question. Our candidate in a local election has had cards printed as per the enclosed, and I should like your opinion as to whether the name and address of the printer and publisher should be shown on these, and also whether the cost of them should appear in the election expenses even though the candidates pay for them themselves.

The card referred to is an ordinary visiting card which reads something as follows:—

JONATHAN JONES

Labour Candidate for Towend Ward,
22 March, 1928.

22 Jonathan Road,
Towend,
Ships-on-Sea.

Answer. The point raised is certainly a novel one though the information given is all too incomplete. However, for guidance we must turn to Section 14 of the Municipal Elec-

tions (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, 1884, which reads:—

"Every bill, placard or poster having reference to a Municipal election shall bear upon the face thereof the name and address of the printer and publisher thereof; and any person printing, publishing or posting, or causing to be printed, published, or posted, any such bill, placard or poster as aforesaid, which fails to bear upon the face thereof the name and address of the printer and publisher, shall, if he is a candidate, be guilty of an illegal practice, and if he is not the candidate, shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds."

The answer, it will be seen, turns upon whether the card referred to is a "bill, placard, or poster." Now these three terms have in the past been pretty liberally construed. But we hardly think the legislature ever intended that a private visiting card, which conveyed a description of an individual as a candidate, should be included in any definition of a bill or placard. But this opinion is based on the assumption that the card is legitimately used, purely as a personal and intimate convenience. If these cards are used for general distribution (and our correspondent is silent on this point), or even in a lavish way, it becomes obvious that the cards are advertisements, and they are clearly bills or placards. We are supported in our view that the use of an item may be put to may change its apparent innocence into infraction of the law, by the decision in the famous "hat-card" case at Walsall, where the use, or rather the intention and use, of a particular card lifted it out of the category of an innocent "bill" to become "a mark of distinction" and therefore a prohibited thing. So, therefore, if this card is too generously used, its innocence disappears. We think the point also matters, whether the candidate usually uses visiting cards, and why he should desire this particular description.

If the cards are really purely a personal expense we hardly think it compulsory to return it in the return of expenses. It is safer, however, to do so. If the cards have been legitimately used, no offence is brought to light when the return is made, as the only printing requiring imprints is the bills, placards, and posters mentioned in the Act.

LOCAL COMMITTEES AND THEIR WORK

The First Step

If I were faced with an election in any constituency to-morrow the first thing I should ask would be about the condition of the Ward and Polling District machinery. This is the first essential thing. Yes, I know all about it; there *are* Ward Committees and you have in this Division or that, *some* Polling District Committees. How many of these are nice little coteries of comrades as far removed from real contact with the electors as the House of Lords is from Heaven? The estimable half-a-dozen are not the committees I mean.

Constituencies are of all sorts and sizes. But there is one principle of organisation governing all of them. It is that a committee must function for the smallest unit into which each area is divided. Even more, the atom must be split, and the ideal to aim at is a personal responsibility for the organisation of each street or group of houses. The nearer to this ideal an organisation is developed the more certain of success will the Party be.

But all this doesn't mean confusion and divided authority. Nothing of the sort. It just means that because we have been divided into small geographical areas for political purposes, and because we can only vote in these geographical areas we have to adapt our organisation so as to find units to man them. To develop these units and reach the voters personally is a local job which local people can accomplish best.

There is no space here to detail all the exact financial and other relations that should exist between local committees and their respective centres. A polling district committee in a County Division may be virtually a Local Labour Party and in a town it may be just a sub-division of a ward committee which in itself is subsidiary both to a Divisional and a Central Borough Party. Commonsense guides the relationships; the tail mustn't wag the dog, nor must the dog chew his tail

to stop it wagging. What is said below concerning the *functions* of the little committees may clear the air in this respect.

No "Paper" Organisations

Beware of paper organisation. The way to set about forming committees is to summon together all known sympathisers in the area being organised. If there are no known people to summon or if people won't come, the only remedy is personal visitation. Drawing up a ward and polling district organisation on paper is not a difficult task. But paper committees are worse than a deception. *A Ward or P.D. Committee must meet.* Only by this test can one prove its existence, and when it meets it has abundant business to discuss. The meetings should, if possible, be held in members' houses. This costs nothing and is usually more productive of that neighbourly contact

Manchester Borough Labour Party requires a Full - Time Secretary. Appointment in conjunction with N.E.C. and at National Scale. All applications to be made not later than 31st August, 1939, to S. Whiting, Hon. Sec., Manchester Borough Labour Party, 32, King-street West, Manchester, 3. Mark envelopes "Application."

and atmosphere which imparts strength to such committees.

And now for the functions and uses of local committees, for what has been said may not have been convincing to those prejudiced against local development, or to those on whom past failures have imposed discouragement. I shall henceforth in this article use the term local committees. A Divisional Party may be likened to a telephone exchange. It has attached to it trunk lines to headquarters, and it has its local Parties, who are the district exchanges. But the local committees correspond to the subscribers. Through these live wires one reaches the homes of the people.

Now there are two sides to constituency preparation. There is the preparatory work among the electors, best done by the local committees, and there is the central preparatory work done by the Divisional Party, through its agent, if it has one, or its officers. The latter functions I shall deal with in due course. The work of the local committees is first to meet—if only two or three—and then to discuss the preparations *in their area*.

It is not the local committees' work to discuss how the main campaign shall be planned—that is the business of the centre—but it is their business to discuss how the highest poll for Labour shall be obtained *in their area*, how workers shall be obtained, to respond to central appeals and advice, and carry out instructions, to plan the canvasses and the distribution of literature, to collect desired information, possibly to steward meetings, to seek committee rooms, to provide the man and woman-power on polling day, and to make suggestions as to how their area may be further developed. How foolish Local Parties are who, sitting in a central room,

think that all these problems can be solved over the heads of locals. These are all essentially local problems and if the locals are not known it is the first business of a Party to find them.

Committees at Work

Probably the first task of a local committee would be to increase its own members. I have said this needs visitation, but near neighbours are the very best people for such work. Make lists of those you know who attend Labour meetings, or buy tickets of you for Party functions. Visit these people and strengthen the bonds. Some will come in.

Next let your local committee study the register for their area. Never stint registers. Local committees of all people should know their register from A to Z. That's where registration claims will come from, but it also means bringing to mind the forgotten sympathetic voter. It means that presently a scheme will evolve for somebody being responsible for every part of that register, and it means workers familiarised with the electorate and knowing their ground on polling day.

I am not keen on turning local committee meetings into educational functions, study and speakers' classes, etc. Public propaganda meetings arranged through them, if you like, but the function of a local committee is to reach and germinate the local electorate. Central functions ought not to be thrust at them. Use the committees, of course, for membership campaigns, but beware of letting your local committees occupy their time principally in collecting subscriptions. That is collectors' work, and it is not the happiest idea to turn local committees into mere machines for raising money.

(Continued on next page)



SEND US YOUR QUERIES
We'll do our best to answer them

LATEST DATE — 5th OF THE MONTH

Preparation Lessens Cost

Now, there are many ways in which the existence of local committees cheapens costs at an election. Nothing is so fruitful of election wastage as want of knowledge of local needs or local information. Local people can say what halls to book, and the price they can get them at. They save the cost of much unnecessary enquiry. They avoid the cost of bill distribution, they can give a quick and cheap window show and so save much bill-posting; and central clerical work is much reduced by their work.

—From the *Labour Organiser*, February, 1928.

MORE REGIONAL COUNCILS

It is desirable, says the Labour Party in a circular, that there should be an early decentralisation of administrative authority in certain aspects of Party work, in order that there may be greater concentration on Constituency development in the many districts far removed from London. Such matters as the recruitment and management of individual membership, the "contracting-in" membership of the Trade Unions, the sale and distribution of Party literature, the development of local propaganda resources, and the settlement of internal disputes, are all readily adaptable to regional initiative and activity. In view of the nature of the responsibility which will rest on Regional Councils, it is imperative that they should be representative of all sections of the Party.

Not the least of the benefits to be secured by Regional Councils of the character already established is the greater co-operation that can be secured between important sections of affiliated Trade Unions and other bodies within the Party. In other important areas preparations must be made for the creation of new Councils, and, as opportunity and finance become available, it is hoped to cover the whole country without undue delay.

Regional Councils are at present in operation in Scotland, South Wales, and Lancashire and Cheshire, whilst the County of London is covered by the

machinery of the London Labour Party. The Scottish Council has existed for many years; the South Wales Regional Council was set up in 1937; and the Lancashire and Cheshire Regional Council in 1938. Already these bodies are proving successful in Party development, propaganda initiative, and the creation of a regional leadership which is calculated to have a profound effect upon the electorate at a General Election.

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BOURNEMOUTH :

We are asked to state that the correct address of Mrs. Cull, D.L. Secretary, is 18 Hillbrow Road, not 19, as given in the L.P. Annual Report.